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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

MAIL STOP RCE

Kenji NISHI

Group Art Unit: 2877

Application No.: 09/856,051

Examiner: K. Brown

Filed: May 17, 2001

Docket No.: 109526

For: EXPOSURE METHOD AND DEVICE

**LARGE ENTITY REQUEST FOR
CONTINUED EXAMINATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.114**

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.114, Applicant hereby requests continued examination.

☒ Applicant further requests entry and consideration of the attached submissions (Request for Reconsideration and Information Disclosure Statement).

The above-identified application was filed on or after June 8, 1995. Thus, entry is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.114(d).

Attached hereto is our check no. 149516 in the amount of ☒ \$770.00 as payment of the fees set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(e). The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 15-0461. Two duplicate copies of this page are enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

Mario A. Costantino
Registration No. 33,565

MAC/ccs

Date: December 22, 2003

**OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400**

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461
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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION FILED WITH RCE

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the September 22, 2003 Final Rejection, and upon entry of the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed herewith, Applicant requests reconsideration of this application. Claims 59-61, 67 and 76-101 are pending.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant requests the Examiner to consider the references submitted in the Information Disclosure Statement filed herewith.

II. All Pending Claims Are In Condition For Allowance

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 87-101, and the identification of allowable subject matter in claims 60, 61 and 77-86. Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, as detailed below.

Independent claims 59 and 67, as well as dependent claim 76, stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,483,056 to Imai. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 59 and 67 recite that: (1) an exposure main unit holds a mask and a substrate; (2) a first illumination system is supported independently from the exposure main unit; (3) a second illumination system is fixed to the exposure main unit; and (4) a mask blind is disposed in a boundary portion of the first and second illumination systems. The Office Action asserts that: (a) elements 5, 6 and 9 of Imai correspond to the claimed first illumination system; (b) elements 11 and 13 of Imai correspond to the claimed second illumination system; and (c) element 10 of Imai corresponds to the claimed mask blind. See page 2 of the Office Action and Fig. 2 of Imai.

Imai does not disclose or suggest the relationship between an exposure main unit, first and second illumination systems and a mask blind as recited in independent claims 59 and 67. Fig. 2 of Imai is merely a schematic view. See, for example, col. 5, lines 33-36 and col. 5, lines 62-64. Imai generally discusses the illumination system at col. 5, line 64 - col. 6, line 42. Imai provides no disclosure regarding the manner in which the various elements are mounted relative to each other. In particular, Imai does not disclose or suggest that any of the various elements of the illumination system (for example, elements 5, 6, 9-11 and 13) are mounted separately from each other, or how those elements are mounted relative to the structure that holds the mask and the substrate.

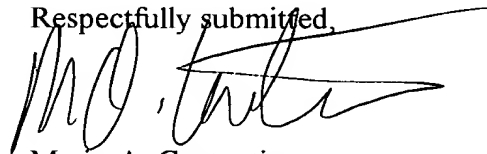
Accordingly, Imai does not disclose or suggest: (1) a first illumination system supported independently from an exposure main unit which holds a mask and a substrate; (2) a second illumination system fixed to the exposure main unit; and (3) a mask blind disposed in a boundary portion of the first and second illumination systems. In summary, Imai does not disclose or suggest first and second illumination systems, a mask disposed in a boundary portion of those illuminations, or how any portion of the illumination system is mounted relative to the structure that holds the mask and the substrate. Thus, Imai does not anticipate

or render obvious the subject matter of independent claims 59 and 67. Therefore, the rejection of claims 59, 67 and 76 should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



Mario A. Costantino
Registration No. 33,565

MAC/ccs

Attachments:

Request for Continued Examination
Information Disclosure Statement

Date: December 22, 2003

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